

# Data Collection

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## INTRODUCTION

As required by the project scope of services, two surveys were developed for the Need Study—the Montana Statewide Transit Agency Survey and the Montana Statewide Social Services Transportation Survey. The surveys were distributed to agencies or companies that provide transportation, purchase transportation, or deal with client groups requiring transportation across the State of Montana.

Public transportation services are defined as agencies currently providing transportation in Montana, which receive or have received some type of public funding. Thirteen organizations received the Transit Agency Survey form, which is presented in Appendix C of this report. One other transportation provider has recently become a general public service—Dawson County UTD. They received a Social Service Survey and did complete it. Therefore, 14 actual general public transit agencies received surveys and 13 responded (93 percent completion.) Postcard reminders were sent to each agency before the due date. Follow-up telephone calls were also made to each organization to determine whether a response was appropriate, to provide clarification, or to obtain additional information.

The Social Services Transportation Survey was sent to approximately 360 agencies. These included social services agencies, developmentally disabled agencies, senior centers, nursing homes and other assistance centers across the State of Montana. The purpose of the Social Services survey is to provide baseline data for transportation needs of the mobility-impaired population. This survey, presented in Appendix D, was designed to gain information about the transportation needs of the low income, elderly, and disabled populations. Approximately 130 surveys (36 percent) have been completed. Appendix E includes a complete list of all agencies that received the transit needs surveys.



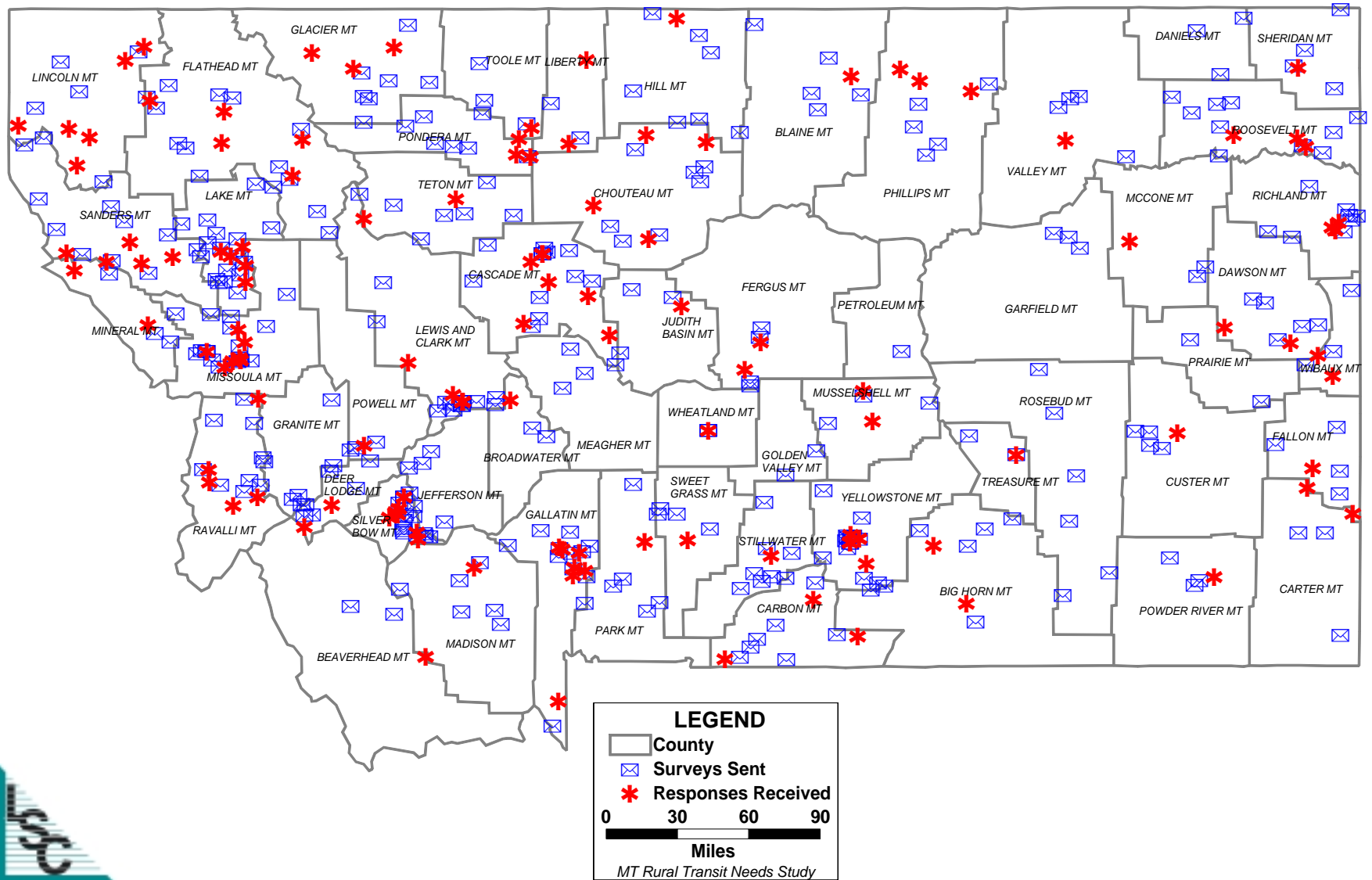
Chapter V presents the county profiles with each agency and summary results. Chapter VI provides a profile for each of the 13 transit agencies, and Chapter VII provides a profile for each social service agency responding to the survey. These data chapters provide an inventory and analysis of the public transportation resources currently available in Montana.

The details for each individual agency are also available in disk format, if the reader needs more information. Figure IV-1 illustrates approximate home office locations for transit agencies across the State of Montana who were recipients of the surveys. The figure also shows the areas that responded to the surveys. Table IV-1 includes a summary of the 13 transit agencies that have completed the transit agency survey. Table IV-2 presents the 130 social service agencies that have completed the survey.

<b>Table IV-1</b> <b>Completed Transit Agency Survey Responses</b>			
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Location</b>
Blackfeet Transit	Browning	Butte Silver Bow Transit	Butte
Fergus County COA	Lewistown	Flathead Area IX Ag. on Aging	Kalispell
Fort Peck Trans. System	Poplar	Great Falls Transit District	Great Falls
Helena Dial-a-Ride	Helena	MET Transit	Billings
Mountain Line	Missoula	Powder River Transportation	Broadus
Ravalli County COA	Hamilton	Valley County Transit	Glasgow
Dawson County UTD	Glendive		
Source: MDT Transit Survey, 2000.			

Figure IV-1

# Survey Recipients



**Table V-2**  
**Completed Social Services Agency Survey Responses**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Location</b>
Achievements, Inc.	Libby	Angel Line	Livingston
Area VIII Agency on Aging	Great Falls	Beartooth Hosp. & Health Center	Red Lodge
Belt Golden Agers	Belt	Big Horn County COA	Hardin
Big Sandy Activities	Big Sandy	Big Sandy Senior Citizens Center	Big Sandy
Blackfeet Nursing Home	Browning	Blackfeet Opportunities	Browning
Bozeman Chp. of People 1st	Bozeman	Bozeman Senior Center	Bozeman
Bridger Golden Age Society	Bridger	Broadwater Health Center	Townsend
Buffalo Hill Terrace	Kalispell	Butte Convalescent Center	Butte
Butte Sheltered Workshop	Butte	Butte Silver Bow COA	Butte
Central MT Skilled Nursing Ctr.	Lewistown	Choteau Activities	Choteau
Choteau Senior Citizens	Choteau	Clark Fork Valley Hosp./Nurs. Home	Plains
Colonial Manor of Deer Lodge	Deer Lodge	Comm. Hospital/Nursing Home	Anaconda
Community Medical Center	Missoula	Crest Nursing Home	Butte
Culbertson Sr. Citizens Org.	Culbertson	Dahl Memorial Health Care	Ekalaka
Darby Silver Tops	Darby	Disability Serv. for Students	Missoula
Dillon Special Resources	Dillon	Eastern Montana Industries	Miles City
Eagle Mount	Bozeman	Fallon County COA	Baker
Elderly Indian Program	St. Ignatius	Flathead Industries	Kalispell
Fallon Medical Complex	Baker	Friendship House	Kalispell
Fort Benton Golden Age Center	Fort Benton	Glendive Medical Center	Glendive
Geraldine Senior Citizens, Inc.	Geraldine	Golden Years Club	Butte
Glen-Wood, Inc.	Plentywood	Hamilton Senior Center	Hamilton
Great Falls Senior Citizens	Great Falls	Havre Day Activity Center	Havre
Harlem Senior Center	Harlem	Hi-Line Home Programs	Glasgow
Helena Industries	Helena	Hospitality House	Big Timber
Hollowtop Senior Center	Pony	Judith Basin Senior Center	Stanford
HRDC/Galavan	Bozeman	Lake County COA	Ronan
Kootenai Senior Citizens	Troy	Libby Care Center	Libby
Lamplighter	Kalispell	Liberty Co. Nursing Home & AL	Chester
Liberty County COA	Chester	Little Bitterroot Services	Plains
Lincoln Senior Center	Lincoln	Malta Opportunities, Inc.	Malta
Lodge Grass Senior Citizens	Lodge Grass	Mineral Community Nursing Home	Superior
McCone Co. MAF & Nursing	Circle		
<b>Continued on next page</b>			
<i>Source: MDT Social Services Survey, 2000.</i>			

**Table V-2 (continued)**  
**Completed Social Services Agency Survey Responses**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Location</b>
Mission Mountain Enterprises	Ronan	Mission Valley Senior Citizens	Ronan
Missoula Ravalli Trans. Mgmt	Missoula	Missoula Senior Citizen Center	Missoula
Monarch-Neihart Senior Center	Neihart	Montana Center on Disabilities	Billings
Mountain View Care Center	Bozeman	Mountain View Manor	Eureka
Mountain View Social Dev. Ctr.	Butte	MT Assoc. of Deaf	Great Falls
Musselshell County COA	Roundup	New Horizons Unlimited, Inc.	Harlem
Northern Gateway Enterpr.	Conrad	North. Rocky Mtn Easter Seal	Great Falls
North Valley Hospital	Whitefish	North Valley Senior Center	Columbia Falls
Opportunity Resources, Inc.	Missoula	Parkview Senior Center	Cut Bank
People First of Anaconda	Anaconda	People First of Billings	Billings
People First of Missoula	Missoula	Phillips County COA	Malta
Phillips Co. Good Samar. Ctr.	Malta	Pondera County COA	Conrad
Quality Life	Conrad	Quality Life Concepts	Great Falls
Ravalli Services Corp.	Hamilton	Reach, Inc.	Bozeman
Regional Services	Billings	R & H Trans. & Del. Service	Bozeman
Richland County COA	Sidney	Richland Opportunities	Sidney
Riverside Health Care Center	Missoula	Rocky Mtn. Dev. Council	Helena
Roosevelt Mem. Med. Ctr.&NH	Culbertson	Roundup Mem. Hosp. & NH	Roundup
Sanders County COA	Hot Springs	Senior Citizens of Lincoln Co.	Libby
Sidney Health Center - EC	Sidney	Silver Lining, Inc.	Helena
Southpark Senior Center	Billings	Special Friends Advoc Prog.	Kalispell
Special K Ranch	Columbus	Spring Meadow Resources	Helena
St Luke NH Hospital	Ronan	St. Regis Senior Citizens Ctr.	St. Regis
Stevensville Senior Center	Stevensville	Thompson Falls Senior Center	Thompson Falls
Tobacco Valley Senior Citizens	Eureka	Toole County COA	Shelby
Treasure Co. Senior Citizens	Sanders	Trout Creek Senior Center	Thompson Falls
Valley Senior Citizens	Fromberg	West Yellowstone Found.	W. Yellowstone
Wheatland County Senior Ctr.	Harlowton	Wibaux Co. Nursing Home	Wibaux
Wibaux Co Senior Citizens	Wibaux	Yellowstone Co. COA	Billings

Source: MDT Social Services Survey, 2000.



## **SURVEY DEVELOPMENT AND DISTRIBUTION**

In order to conduct this study of transit needs and benefits in Montana, an examination of the existing conditions was required including: estimating transportation need, identifying and assessing existing transportation services, estimating unmet transportation need, and preparing a set of recommendations for improving the structure and delivery of transportation services. A critical component of this study was the collection of data on existing transportation services and their use. This was achieved through the administration of the two surveys to transportation service providers and social service providers across the state. It is the survey effort and related findings that are the focus of the next few chapters.

The survey instruments were developed through an open and iterative process. The process involved a small working group of the Advisory Committee members, SG Associates, and LSC. Appendices C and D contain the final versions of the transit surveys that were mailed to transportation providers and social service agencies.

Prior to the mailing of the survey, Janis Winston, Montana Department of Transportation Transit Section Supervisor, completed a letter to be sent along with the surveys. The letter emphasized to transit providers and social service agencies the importance of filling out the survey. Included in the survey packet was the letter from Janis Winston encouraging the participation of each provider, basic survey instructions, and the survey. Both surveys were also available on the Internet for those agencies wishing to download or view the surveys.

The final survey instruments were mailed to transit agencies and social service providers during March 2000. Instructions included the request that surveys be returned by early April. An additional 100 social services surveys were mailed out to developmentally-disabled service providers in early April at the request of the Advisory Committee. The Committee wanted to ensure that the developmentally-disabled agencies across the state were contacted. Reminder due date cards and follow-up telephone calls were given to these survey recipients in late April 2000.



The LSC Team assembled the information obtained through the surveys and follow-up efforts into a database. Where gaps in survey information were apparent, the LSC Team used supplemental data from secondary sources to complete the database. This information, presented in summary form, is used to assess existing services and to determine unmet need. Existing conditions for those transit providers and social service providers who completed the survey are presented herein as a set of profiles.

A key component of the Montana Rural Transit Needs Study is the preparation, dissemination, and analysis of the survey of transportation providers. The data submitted from each agency is the baseline data available at the statewide level. This effort has proven to be a valuable and time-consuming process. Every effort was made to obtain the correct and necessary information from each transit provider. In all, the data collection process lasted three months.

Even though complete data were not obtained from all agencies, sufficient information has been obtained from the most significant providers and from secondary sources that an estimated analysis of ridership, vehicle utilization, and costs at the county level could be conducted. These analyses are presented in subsequent chapters of this report. Once again, it is important to note that although every effort was made to quantify the level of existing transit services, not all services were included in this study. The study did not quantify the services provided by taxis, family members, carpools, and other informal providers.

Provider summaries by county are presented in Chapter V of this Final Report. This summary will include transit agency and social services agency data. However, the summaries will include **only** data from agencies that have returned surveys. It is likely that some agencies may be in the county, but did not return the survey—and therefore are not included in the countywide analysis.

Chapter VI, *Montana Transit Agency Providers*, includes detailed information about services provided by each transit agency. This includes annual pas-



senger-trips. In addition, the total number of vehicles, annual operating costs, vehicle-miles, vehicle-hours, and other data are presented. Note that where information is not provided in these profile tables, it means that no data were provided by the survey recipient in response to either the questionnaire or follow-up calls. Chapter VII, *Montana Social Service Providers*, includes details from the social service surveys.

